



Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

This class will be offered by remote access. Students will be expected to log in to regularly scheduled Zoom sessions.

Class attendance and participation in remote or synchronous online learning classes. The same expectations for student engagement and participation which applies to in-class learning also apply to remote or synchronous learning situations. Students who log into the Zoom site but do not contribute during discussion times and are not visible through live video will not be counted as participating in the class.

Please see information at <https://wycliffecollege.ca/remoteteaching>

Before proceeding you will require a webcam and microphone. Laptops have these by default. If you have a desktop you will need to purchase a webcam (webcams come with built in microphone).

Notice of video recording and sharing (Download and re-use prohibited)

Remote courses, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session. Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation, and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor. For questions about recording and use of videos in which you appear please contact your instructor.

Course Identification

Course Number : WYP3305/6305
Course Name: Preaching the Old Testament
Class Location: St. George Campus, Wycliffe College (5 Hoskin Ave.)
Class Day & Time: Thursdays 11a.m.–1 p.m.

Instructor Information

Instructor: Glen Taylor, PhD
E-mail: glen.taylor@utoronto.ca

Office Hours: Never before class; after or ask or email for appointment
Office: Room 231 (West end, second floor)

Course Prerequisites or Requisites

Ideally, one course of Old Testament Introduction and one course of preaching.

Course Description

A practical, interactive introduction to the particularities of Christian preaching from the Old Testament. Special emphasis will be placed on biblical exegesis, hermeneutics, and preaching with sensitivity to the varied forms of OT literature—narrative, saga, law, prophetic oracles, wisdom material, etc. Students will exegete passages, prepare sermons (preaching twice), learn new skills and ideas and interact with the sermons of others, whether classmates or role models.

Course Methodology

A goal of the course, in general, is to help students build upon and enhance their God-given gifts for, and their call to, preaching the Old Testament. More specifically, it is to enhance the students' understanding of Old Testament literature, and to increase their skill at, and confidence in, preaching from the Old Testament, including "difficult" passages.

A specific skill-set goal will be for the student to demonstrate a high level of proficiency at the following:

- a) Method of exegesis that includes inductive Bible study
- b) Sound hermeneutical approach to interpretation and application
- c) Familiarity with the idea of making a point "stick" in the minds of the hearers and to "go deep" with it in terms of its significance (preserving the tradition of old-fashioned, point-by-point preaching)
- d) Demonstrated ability to reflect theologically on an OT text and relate it appropriately to the NT
- e) Familiarity with, and appreciation of the importance of, key resources (commentaries, etc.)

How the Goal Will Be Measured

The component of understanding Old Testament literature will be measured through the graded evaluation of exegetical assignments. The component of increased skill at preaching will be measured by the performance of students to their preaching experience, including their second sermon as compared to the first. The general goal will be addressed through instruction and feedback from professor and peers alike. Proficiency at the skill-set will be measured by results obtained from quizzes, assignments and sermons

Course Outcomes

| COURSE OUTCOMES | COURSE ELEMENT | PROGRAM OUTCOMES |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|

| By the end of this course, students | This outcome will be achieved through these course elements: | This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv) |
|---|--|--|
| • will have been introduced to the particularities of Christian preaching from the Old Testament; | course as a whole; lecture 1; weekly assignment 1 | MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1, 2.3 |
| • will have become aware of the importance of approaching the varied forms of OT literature differently; | course as a whole, lectures 3, 6, 8, 10, 11; weekly assignment 2 | MTS: 1.1, 3.1 MDiv: 1.1, 3.1 |
| • will have learned how to exegete biblical passages (including inductive Bible study) and take a sound hermeneutical approach to interpretation and application; | course as a whole; weekly assignments 1 and 2; project (exegesis and sermon) | MTS: 1.1, 2.1 MDiv: 2.1, 2.3 |
| • will have acquired new skills and ideas for preaching; | course as a whole; lecture 2, project | MTS: 2.1 MDiv: 2.1 |
| • will be able to reflect theologically on OT texts and related them appropriately to the NT; | course as a whole; sermon project | MTS: 1.1, 1.2 MDiv: 1.1, 1.3, 2.1 |
| • will have increased their skill at, and confidence in, preaching from the Old Testament, including "difficult" passages; | course as a whole; homiletical reflection at the end of some lectures | MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 2.2 |

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

- Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Preaching the Old Testament*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1989.
- Scott M. Gibson, ed. *Preaching the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.
- Bob Fyall, *Preaching Old Testament Narrative*. Grove Books

Strongly Recommended

Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Preaching Hard Texts of the Old Testament*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994.

Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

Course Website

- This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>. Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask the assistant registrar for further help (jhocking@wycliffe.utoronto.ca).

Class Schedule

Tentative List of Topics to Be Covered

Most weeks, we will examine a single passage in class and, following the instructor's method, move from exegesis to a sermon. By applying the same approach to a different text each week, the instructor's method should become second nature for the student, who in many cases shall similarly be expected weekly to turn a biblical text into a sermon.

Week 1: Sep 17 Introduction to class and methodology

Hour 1: Introductory Matters, including obstacles to preaching the OT and a better and worse way to preach the fall of Jericho (from Gibson, pp. 59-61).

Hour 2: Genesis 13: How do we know we shouldn't preach that Abram was irresponsible in offering Lot the promised land?

Homework in preparation for (i.e. due at start of class) next week (Sep 24):

BD/AD

1) after reading my guidelines for Inductive Bible Study and noting my sample observations from Genesis 1, submit your own best 25 factual observations on Genesis 11:1-9. (Hint: make the observation relate to some other phenomenon.)

2) get ready for a short-answer quiz based on your reading of Achtemeier, "Personal Prologue" (chapter 1) and "Why the OT is Necessary for the Church" (chapter 2), and of

Jeffrey Arthurs, "Preaching the Old Testament Narratives," pp. 73–85 in Scott M. Gibson, ed. *Preaching the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006)

3) After studying (by first making observations on) Gen 11:1-9, state and defend (maximum of 200 words) how you think the text (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/preached and what your application would be. (What you state need not be your "final answer", but should nonetheless be demonstrable from the text itself.)

SEGMENT 1: NARRATIVE TEXTS OF THE OT

Week 2: Sep 24: **Genesis 11:1-9**

We will look at Genesis 11:1-9 in detail and in the second hour listen to a sermon on Genesis 11:1–9.

Homework:

- BD: 1) Submit 25 factual observations on Genesis 22:1-19
- 2) After studying Gen 22:1–19, state and defend (200 words max) how you think the text (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/preached and what application you would make. (Your answer need not be final, but should be justifiable from the text itself.)
- 3) Get ready for a short-answer quiz on your reading of Steve Mathewson, "The Greatest Thing You Can Do for Your Kids (Genesis 22," pp. 161-75 in Steven Mathewson, *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*, the homily on the Akedah by Fleming Rutledge, and Wilkerson, "Climbing Test Mountain," in Robinson and Batten, eds., *Models of Biblical Preaching*, pp. 1-21

AD required/BD optional:

- 1) Come to class ready to give the gist of S. D. Walters, "Wood, Sand, and Stars: Structure and Theology of Gn 22:1–19," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 3 (1987) 301–330.
- 2) provide a sermon outline based on your own understanding of the message of Genesis 22.

Week 3: Oct 1: **Genesis 22: 1-19**

Homework for beginning of class on Oct 8

After studying Gen 32:1-32; 33:1–11, state and defend (maximum of 200 words) how you think the text (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/preached and what application you would make. (Your answer need not be final, but should be justifiable from the text itself.)

Only after completing the preceding, read Taylor, pp. 33-36 in Thomas P. Power, ed. *Guide for the Christian Perplexed*. N.B. There will be a quiz on this reading.

AD required/BD optional:

J. Glen Taylor, "Decoding Jacob at the Jabbok and Genesis 32: From Crude Solar Mythology to Profound Hebrew Theology," pp. 1-25 in *The Bulletin 2008/09, Canadian Society of Biblical Studies* Volume 68, ed. Richard S. Ascough. N.B. There will be a quiz on this reading.

Week 4: Oct 8: **Genesis 32**

Homework for beginning of class on Oct 15

BD and AD students:

After reading carefully three times the story of David and Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 11:1-12:10, state and defend how you think the text (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/ preached. Be sure to include in your statement a clear subject-complement statement.

Make 25 observations on 1 Kings 22 and state and defend how you think the text (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/ preached. Be sure to include in your statement a clear subject-complement statement.

Only after you have completed your own observations on 1 Kings 22, read Taylor, *Guide to the Perplexed*, pp. 37-43.

AD students (BD optional)

As a follow up to our study of Genesis 32, read Frederick Holmgren, "Holding Your Own Against God! *Interpretation* 44 (1990). (There will be a quiz on this reading.) I was able to find a copy online at journals.sagepub.com

Week 5: Oct 15: **2 Samuel 11:1-12:10 and 1 Kings 22**

Today, as we conclude considerations of narrative texts, we will hear and discuss a sermon on each of the two passages above. (One sermon is by Prof. Haddon Robinson, the other by me.)

Homework for beginning of class on Oct 22nd

For BD and AD students:

-in lieu of our scheduled week on Exodus 3, read Exodus 3 and listen to the sermon of Ephraim Radner on Exodus 3 on the Wycliffe College Website for January 26th, 2017.

-prepare for a quiz based on your reading of the following: a) Achtemeier, *Preaching the Old Testament*, chapter on preaching OT law (ca. pp. 99-108); b) Daniel I. Block "Preaching Old Testament Law to New

Testament Christians—Part 3” Ministry Magazine September 2006; and c) the blog notes on Barth’s view of Leviticus 14 and 16.

-after studying **Leviticus 13:47-59 and 14:33-57**, state and defend (maximum of 200 words) how you think the text (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/preached and what application you would make. Remember to include a subject-complement statement.

AD required/BD optional:

-prepare for a quiz, or make summary notes on, parts 1 and 2 of Daniel I. Block “Preaching Old Testament Law to New Testament Christians” Ministry Magazine September 2006. (To access Google the title of this essay, including “Parts 1 and 2”)

-make summary notes (3 pages d.s.) on Kathryn Greene-McCreight, “A Type of the One to Come: Leviticus 14 and 16 in Barth’s Church Dogmatics” available on academia.edu (26 pages).

LEGAL TEXTS

Week 6: Oct 22: **Leviticus 14:33-57**

We will discuss how to do an exegesis of this passage, and suggest how best to preach it.

Homework for beginning of class on November 5. Read Achtemeier’s chapter on Preaching the Psalms. Read Mark Futado, “Confidence in a Cup: Psalms 16, 23” chapter 16 in Andrew J. Schmutzer and David Howard, eds. *The Psalms: Language for All Seasons of the Soul*

October 29: Reading Week: No Class

POETIC TEXTS

Week 7: November 5: **Psalms 16, 22 and 23**

We will discuss the readings assigned for today and do an exegesis and suggested sermon on Psalm 22.

Homework for beginning of class on Nov 12

Submit your best 25 observations on Psalm 73 and state and defend (500 words max) how you think the text (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/preached? Only after doing this, read the sermon on Psalm 73 by James C. Howell, pp. 81-85, of Clinton McCann, Jr., and James C. Howell, *Preaching the Psalms* (Abingdon, 2001).

POETRY

Week 8: November 12: **Psalm 73**

Homework for beginning of class on Nov 19

Submit your best 25 observations on Psalm 113 and state and defend (500 words max) how you think the text (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/preached?

Week 9: November 19: **Psalm 113**

Homework for beginning of class on November 26th

Prepare for a quiz based on my lecture notes on Isaiah.

Submit your best 25 observations on Isaiah 61 and state and defend (maximum of 200 words) how you think the text (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/preached and what application you would draw from it.

Read Achtemeier's chapter on Preaching the Prophets.

AD required/BD optional:

John Sailhamer, "Preaching the Prophets," pp. 115-35 in Gibson, ed. *Preaching the OT*.

PROPHETS

Week 10: November 26: **Isaiah 61**

Homework for beginning of class on December 3rd

Submit your best 25 observations on and state and defend (200 words max) how you think Zechariah 5 (including in its context) wants to be interpreted/preached and what application you would draw from it.

Week 11: December 3rd **Zechariah 5 and Zechariah**

Homework for beginning of class on December 10

BD Required:

Prepare for a quiz on Achtemeier, *Preaching from the Old Testament*, chapter 9, "Preaching from the Wisdom Literature," pp. 165–83.

AD Required, BD Optional:

Submit a note indicating whether or not you have conscientiously read Daniel C. Fredericks, "Preaching Qohelet," pp. 417–42, in Mark Boda, Tremper Longman and Cristian Rata, eds. *The Words of the Wise are Like Goats* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013).

Week 12: December 10th: **Preaching Wisdom Literature and Student Sermons**

Evaluation

Requirements

Course Requirements for BD Students

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|---|-----|
| 1. Weekly assignments, including quizzes on readings | 30% |
| 2. Class attendance & engagement | 20% |
| 3. Step-by-step from exegesis-to sermon | 20% |
| 4. Sample sermon segment that demonstrates c) above | 10% |
| 5. Short essay that shows a thorough understanding of Fyall's approach and of your ability to apply his approach to another biblical book | 20% |

Course Requirements for AD Students

In addition to 1, 2 and 3 above:

4. Replicate Fyall in relation to another biblical book for the class. Answer: Is Fyall's approach out of step with the New Homiletic (as understood by any well-know practitioner you choose) and if so how/why? And if so, which should be adjusted (and how, and why) Fyall or the New Homiletic? (Three pages d.s.)
5. A term project that relates to your interest and that meets the approval of the professor.

Prerequisites

One introductory course on preaching and one introductory course in Old Testament.

Course evaluation

At the end of the course students are expected to complete a course evaluation. The evaluation is done online and instructions will be contained in an e-mail message that will be sent out by the Wycliffe College registrar.

Grading System

| Letter Grade | Numerical Equivalents | Grade Point | Grasp of Subject Matter |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| A+ | 90–100% | 4.0 | Profound & Creative |
| A | 85–89% | 4.0 | Outstanding |
| A- | 80–84% | 3.7 | Excellent |
| B+ | 77–79% | 3.3 | Very Good |
| B | 73–76% | 3.0 | Good |
| B- | 70–72% | 2.7 | Satisfactory |
| FZ | 0–69% | 0 | Failure |

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value

| | |
|-----|--|
| NCR | Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation |
| SDF | Standing deferred (a temporary extension) |
| INC | Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value |
| WDR | Withdrawal without academic penalty |
| AEG | May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value |

Policy on Assignment Extensions

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office.

One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

Additional Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks>) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

Course Evaluations. At the end of the course students are expected to complete a course evaluation. The evaluation is done online and instructions will be contained in an e-mail message that will be sent out by the Wycliffe College registrar.

Bibliography

Websites:

<http://divinity.lib.vanderbilt.edu/homiletics.htm>
www.cyberword.com/preach/guide/htm
www.congregationalresources.org
www.greatpreaching.org
www.anglicansonline.org/resources/preaching
www.anglicanhistory.org
www.pewtopulpit.com
www.workingpreacher.org

Sermons:

www.sermonlinks.com
www.sermonindex.net
www.abideinchrist.com/messages
www.expositor.com
www.sermonaudio.com
Sermons by Augustine: www.newadvent.org/fathers

Sermons on the internet, by women (from sermonindex.net)

N.B. The number after each name indicates the number of sermons available.

Anne Dutton (80), Anna R. Atwater (1), Anne Audland Camm (1), Anne Bradstreet (1), Amy Carmichael (1) Beverly (gender?) Carradine (9), Mrs. Charles E. Cowman including “Whatever the Cost” on Gen. 22:16-18 and on Gen 32. (376). Margaret Fell (7), Loraine Boettner (1), Mary Warburton Booth (1), Nancy Leigh DeMoss (6), Jill Briscoe (12), Sarah Cheevers (1), Melody Green (2), Anne Ortlund (44), Hannah More (1), Mother Julian of Norwich (1), Sarah Foulkes Moore (1), Ruth Pitman (1), Hannah Whitall Smith (19), Virginia Schurman (1), Elizabeth Stirredge (1), Mary Wilder Tileston (365).

See also the list of sermons both in print and on the internet in Bos, pp. 374–77.

General Works on Old Testament Preaching

Achtemeier, Elizabeth. "Deuteronomy for the Preacher." *Interpretation* 41 (1987) 269-81.

_____. *The Old Testament and the Proclamation of the Gospel*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1973.

_____. *Preaching from the Old Testament*. Louisville: John Knox, 1989.

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_____. "The Relevance of the Old Testament for Christian Preaching." In *A Light Unto My Path: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Jacob M. Myers*. Gettysburg Theological Studies IV. Edited by Howard M. Bream, Ralph D. Heim, and Carey A. Moore. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1974. Pp. 3-25.

Allen, Ronald J. *Contemporary Biblical Interpretation for Preaching*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1984.

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Anderson, Bernard W., ed. *The Old Testament and Christian Faith: A Theological Discussion*. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

Arthurs, Jeffrey D. "Performing the Story." *Preaching* 12 (March-April 1997): 30-35.

Avishur, Yitzhak. *Studies in Biblical Narrative: Style, Structure and the Ancient Near Eastern Literary Background*. Tel-Aviv-Jaffa, Israel: Archaeological Centre Publication, 1999.

Bailey, Raymond, ed. *Hermeneutics for Preaching: Approaches to Contemporary Interpretations of Scripture*. Nashville: Broadman, 1992.

Baker, David L. "Typology and the Christian Use of the Old Testament," *SJT* 29 (1976) 137-57.

Birch, Bruce C. *What Does the Lord Require? The Old Testament Call to Social Witness*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985.

Bos, Rein. *We Have Heard That God is with You: Preaching the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

Braaten, Carl E., ed. *Reclaiming the Bible for the Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. (Several relevant articles.)

- Bruce, F. F. *The Time is Fulfilled: Five Aspects of the Fulfillment of the Old Testament in the New*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.
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- Donovan Turner, Mary. *Old Testament Words: Reflections for Preaching*. Chalice Press. ISBN 08272-27140.
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- Juel, Donald. "The Old Testament in Christian Proclamation." *Word and World* 3 (1983): 231-237.
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DRAFT

BISHOP BILL HOCKIN'S METHOD OF PREPARING A SHORT HOMILY
(ADAPTED BY PROF. GLEN TAYLOR, WYCLIFFE COLLEGE)

STAGE ONE: PREPARATION

1. Read the text four or five times over a period of days, prayerfully letting the story sink into the imagination. Ask and answer fifteen simple questions¹ that you systematically pose about the text's features.
2. Do your best to plug the passage into *its context* by reading what precedes and follows the story, and by reading an introduction to the book in a good Study Bible (look especially for any comments on the message or purpose of the book).²
3. Identify the conflict in the text between the human circumstance and the divine desire.
 - a. Identify in the text the human longing for something better.
 - b. Identify in the text the Divine will and provision for something better.
4. Identify in the text who benefits from God's provision and why.
5. Identify the "nerve" -- that central theme that is applicable to the lives of your congregation and in touch with the context and purpose of the book
6. Find the hope of the text by exploiting the gap or differences between "the human longing" and "the Divine desire."

STAGE TWO: GATHERING RESOURCES

1. Refer to at least one reputable Bible commentary³ to make sure that you have the interpretation right and are not in conflict with established views. Read the text in different versions, one of which could be a paraphrase of the text (e.g. The New Living Bible or The Message)
2. Explore the two sides of the conflict in the text. Write down in your own words both ideas.

N.B. Make sure the conflict isn't cutesy and artificial by asking the following. . .

-Is my idea in harmony with *how the text wants to be heard*? In other words, does my preaching idea fit with the context of the biblical passage and with the biblical author's purpose for writing the book?

¹ Suggested questions include structural ones—"what is emphasized (whether through repetition or space given), compared or contrasted, surprisingly omitted or seemingly extraneous (and why?); as well as thematic—what role does this passage play in the overall argument of the larger block of which it is a part? What message is *the text* trying to emit (as opposed to what message / want to extract from it)?

² Each biblical book was written in response to a pastoral/theological issue of some sort. To find it, read the "Purpose/Occasion" section in the Introduction to a commentary. Often the commentator will say more about this purpose under the various subheadings of his outline of each major section of the biblical book.

³ As a general rule, a reputable commentary will be produced by one of the following publishers within the last 30 years: Baker, Eerdmans, Michael Glazier, Augsburg/Fortress, Jewish Publication Society,

(Imagine the author of the biblical book in your congregation either nodding his head to your idea -- “this is what I meant!” -- or shaking it in surprise or bewilderment -- “I never intended a cute, ‘clever’ message like that!”)

3. Use your own life *or the experiences of others* to flesh out the story of the text to find contemporary examples of the conflict inherent in the text.

Think of one or two main points of good news arising out of the text or one or two things that we have to do as faithful believers and as people who want to claim God’s redemptive alternative.

STAGE THREE: *STRUCTURING THE SERMON*

1. Choose a biblical text that best describes the message.
E.g. “So Lot pitched his tent near Sodom . . .” (Gen. 13:12).
2. Name the theme or purpose of the sermon, i.e. “my message is about. . .”
3. Share an illustration, personal experience or story that states the theme or conflict (human need) in non-religious terms.
4. Retell the story of the text in your own words highlighting the theme and what Jesus says or does about it -- to bring the “Divine Desire” to the situation.
5. Draw out two or three points that people can take home that will bring hope to their lives.
 - frame each point with restatement (i.e. at beginning and end) so people can follow
 - restate + two or three different illustrations of pieces of support + restate
6. Conclude the sermon intentionally, even if only to state the main point once more sharply and differently

Other ways: summary, story that brings it all together, story that ties in to start of sermon